29th January 1931]

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) The hon. Member is referred to the answer to clauses (*b*) to (*d*) of question No. 105.

(*c*) The Government have not got the statement.

(*d*) The information has been called for.

Circular regarding the giving of finger-prints by political prisoners.

*187-B *Q.*—Mr. U. C Subrahmanya Bhatt: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Inspector-General of Police has issued a circular that persons convicted in connexion with the civil disobedience movement are required to give their finger-prints;

(*b*) if so, what is the said circular and whether it was given under the instructions of the Local Government; and

(*c*) how many of the political prisoners refused to give their finger-prints and how many were proceeded against and sentenced in this Presidency for such refusal?

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) In August 1930 the Inspector-General of Police issued a circular to all District Superintendents of Police to the effect that, in so far as offences committed in connexion with the civil disobedience movement fell within the provisions of the Identification of Prisoners Act (i.e., if punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term of one year or upwards) persons arrested for such offences should, in conformity with the standing instructions of the Police Department, have their finger-prints taken. Certain District Superintendents of Police thought that this circular should be given retrospective effect and accordingly began to take the finger-prints of persons already in jail, whereupon the Inspector-General issued, in October, another circular stating that the previous circular need only be applied from the date of its receipt and not with retrospective effect.

The circulars in question were not issued under the orders of the Government. The application of the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 (Act XXXIII of 1920), does not require the sanction of the Government.

(*c*) The information has been called for.

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"May I know what is the object of getting the finger-prints of these prisoners?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir M. Krishnan Nayar:—"It is for identification."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"Was there at any time any difficulty in regard to the identification of these prisoners, as in the case of people of a bad character who give different names at different times?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir M. Krishnan Nayar:—"It depends upon individual cases."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"I want to know if there was any difficulty in any case?"

The hon. Diwan Bahahur Sir M. Krishnan Nayar:—"That question should be put to the particular Police officer who has to deal with the person concerned."